

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

The Howard County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 338 of the Howard County Administration Center. Those in attendance included President Paul Wyman, Vice-President Robert B. Bray, Member Jack Dodd, County Attorney Alan Wilson, and County Auditor Jessica Secrease.

The meeting was called to order by Major Gary Cook and conducted by President Paul Wyman. Commissioner Brad Bray led the Pledge of Allegiance, and President Wyman offered a word of prayer.

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the regular meeting held on August 16, 2021, having been previously submitted and reviewed, were approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS/ RECONGITIONS:

Employee of the Month Award:

The Commissioners congratulated county employee Chad Bourff; his position with the County is with Adult Probation as a Case Manager and Veterans' Court Probation Officer. Mr. Bourff helped a veterans' court participant mow their yard while they had heart issues. Another participant needed an air conditioner, and Mr. Bourff went to the ATM and got money out to buy an air conditioner for him. It is with great honor that the Commissioners extended congratulations and the memento from Kokomo Opalescent Glass to him. Pictures were taken, and congratulations were given by all.

IN THE MATTER OF DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS & REPORTS:

Planning Commission:

Subdivision (Case 7-CP-21)

Planning Commission Executive Director Greg Sheline submitted a new subdivision, Koziel Estate Subdivision, located on a new lot at 872 S. 800 E., Greentown, Indiana. There was a favorable recommendation by the board. There was no remonstrance. Koziel Estate Subdivision has one lot and was approved; it was also approved at the drainage board meeting with no remonstrance. With the new subdivision request having been heard, Commissioner Dodd made a motion to approve Subdivision Koziel Estate Subdivision located at 872 S. 800 E., Greentown, Indiana as presented. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Subdivision (Case 8-CP-21)

Planning Commission Executive Director Greg Sheline submitted a new subdivision, N&S Subdivision, located on a new lot at 10403 W. 00 N.S., Kokomo, Indiana. There was a favorable recommendation by the board. There was no remonstrance. N&S Subdivision has one lot and was approved, and it was also approved at the drainage board meeting with no remonstrance. With the new subdivision request having been heard, Commissioner Bray made a motion to approve Subdivision N&S Subdivision located at 10403 W. N.S., Kokomo, Indiana as presented. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Rezoning (Case 8-CZ-21)

Planning Commission Executive Director Greg Sheline submitted Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-34 for the rezoning of the property located at 1095 N. 1250 W., Kokomo, Indiana from PR (Park & Recreation) to AG (Agricultural). There was a favorable recommendation by the board. There was no remonstrance. With the rezoning request having been heard, Commissioner Bray made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-34 as presented. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Rezoning (Case 10-CZ-21)

Planning Commission Executive Director Greg Sheline submitted Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-35 for the rezoning of the property located at 872 S. 800 E., Greentown, Indiana from AG (Agricultural) to RR (Rural Residential). There was a favorable recommendation by the board. There was no remonstrance. With the rezoning request having been heard, Commissioner Dodd made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-35 as presented. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Rezoning (Case 11-CZ-21)

Planning Commission Executive Director Greg Sheline submitted Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-36 for the rezoning of the property located at 10403 W. 00 N.S., Kokomo, Indiana from AG (Agricultural) to RR (Rural Residential). There was a favorable recommendation by the board. There was no remonstrance. With the rezoning request having been heard, Commissioner Bray made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-BCCO-36 as presented. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Howard County Maintenance Department:***Sheriff's Department Barn Roof Refurbishing:***

Maintenance Superintendent Bill Stonestreet presented that the refurbishing at the Sheriff Department's barn roof will be repaired by Global Building Solutions in the amount of \$5,984.00. Mr. Stonestreet spoke to Major Cook, and this will be covered under one of the Sheriff Department's account for building repair. Commissioner Dodd made a motion to approve the Sheriff Department's barn roof refurbishing by Global Building Solutions in the amount of \$5,984.00. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Public Defender's Office Cabinetry:

Maintenance Superintendent Bill Stonestreet presented that the cabinetry in the Public Defender's office needs replaced. Hearn Construction will replace the cabinetry in the amount \$2,600.00. Mr. Stonestreet would like to pay for this out of the Cumulative Capital Development Fund. Commissioner Bray made a motion to approve the replacement of the cabinetry in the Public Defender's office in the amount of \$2,600.00 to Hearn Construction. Commissioner Dodd seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF NEW BUSINESS:**Poor Relief Appeal Hearing:**

Commissioner Dodd held a Poor Relief Appeal Hearing on August 13, 2021, regarding a denial of assistance by the Center Township Trustee for Jason Moore. Commissioner Dodd's recommendation was to uphold the findings of the Center Township Trustee. Commissioner Dodd made a motion to uphold the findings of the Center Township Trustee. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Howard County Highway Department:***Garage Reconstruction Advertisement:***

Highway Superintendent Amber Tolle presented the garage reconstruction advertisement for bids. Commissioner Dodd approved for the garage reconstruction advertisement to be published for bids. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Bridge Inspection Consultant Award:

Highway Superintendent Amber Tolle presented the consultant that was chosen for the bridge inspection for year 2022 through 2025. This was awarded to USI; this contract was submitted to IDOT and approved.

Purchase of Plow:

Highway Superintendent Amber Tolle submitted a request to purchase a one-way tandem plow for the cost of \$16,878.00. There are sufficient funds to cover this purchase from the MVH (Unrestricted) Fund 1176, Vehicles Account 47230.

Purchase of Street Sweeper:

Highway Superintendent Amber Tolle submitted a request to purchase a pull behind broom for the cost of \$27,500.00. There are sufficient funds to cover this purchase from the MVH (Unrestricted) Fund 1176, Vehicles Account 47230.

IN THE MATTER OF CLAIMS AND REPORTS:

Howard County Auditor Jessica Secrease submitted the following claims and reports for the Commissioners' information and approval:

1. **Salary Claims:** The Commissioners' Salary, Hourly, and Overtime Claims for payment on August 27, 2021, in the amount of \$847,125.20 were submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
2. **Operating Claims:** The Commissioners' Operating Claims for payment on September 7, 2021, in the amount of \$1,257,457.72 were submitted and approved as presented on a motion made by Commissioner Dodd. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
3. **Ratify Claims:** Auditor Jessica Secrease presented a claim from J&K Communications, Inc. in the amount of \$26,310.53 for ratification. A motion was made by Commissioner Dodd to ratify the claim for J&K Communications, Inc in the amount of \$26,310.53. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and motion carried.
4. **Monthly Reports:** Reports were submitted for review and accepted by the Board of Commissioners:
 - a. Treasurer's Office Monthly Report for the period ending July 31, 2021
 - b. Weights & Measures Monthly Report

IN THE MATTER OF COMMISSIONERS ISSUES:

Commissioner President Paul Wyman commented that the State Board of Accounts recently completed their annual audit in the Auditor's Office. This audit was completed early with the help of everyone in the Auditor's Office. Commissioner Wyman stated that he appreciates the staff in the Auditor's Office for being so helpful, which results in a less costly audit.

IN THE MATTER OF ATTORNEY ISSUES:

Contract with Pictometry

County Attorney Alan Wilson submitted the annual contract between the Assessor's Office and Pictometry. This company provides aerial views of building for assessment purposes. A motion was made by Commissioner Dodd to approve the contract between the assessor office and Pictometry. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and motion carried.

Ground Lease for the Art Sculpture Walk:

County Attorney Alan Wilson, submitted the ground lease for the Art Sculpture Walk. A motion was made by Commissioner Dodd to approve the ground lease for the Art Sculpture Walk. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bray, and motion carried.

IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident Brad Semon of 10954 E. 100 S., Greentown, Indiana – Mr. Semon stated that the special exception was denied thru the Board Zoning Appeals for the solar company. Mr. Semon asked if a moratorium could be put in place before the ordinance is drafted. Commissioner President Paul Wyman stated that a draft of the ordinance will be released soon and made public for review.

Resident Clee Oliver of 5768 W. 00 N.S., Kokomo, Indiana – Mr. Oliver asked if comments were still being taken for the writing of the solar ordinance. Commissioner President Paul Wyman stated that comments are still being taken and will be reviewed. Mr. Oliver provided some information from Pulaski County to the Commissioners.

Resident Paula Davis of 2722 S. 344 E. Kokomo, Indiana – Ms. Davis is the Chapter Chair for Moms for Liberty of Howard County. Ms. Davis stated that last Wednesday, Governor Holcomb had assured local elected officials that they would retain decision making powers, and she stated that she felt that this was stripped away as soon as schools started making their own decisions. Ms. Davis feels that children are being denied a free appropriate education because they potentially will have to be quarantined. Moms for Liberty would like to see the local elected officials of Howard County stand up to what they see as an "abuse of power" at the state level of government and hold Governor Holcomb accountable.

Resident David Thomas of 2713 Seabiscuit Lane, Kokomo, Indiana – Mr. Thomas stated that he is here to support Moms for Liberty as his wife Lindsay is a board member. The pandemic started on March 16, 2020 with 15 days to flatten the curve, but at this point, it is day 540. Mr. Thomas stated that he feels that the United States has gone from a free society life to having to comply to guidelines, rules, and laws without question. He stated that he is a husband and father and wants to stand up for everyone's freedoms.

Resident Kayla Bennett of 602 E. Jefferson St., Kokomo, Indiana – Ms. Bennett stated that she would like the testing site at the North Bell Street to be moved away from the residual area due to all the traffic blocking people's driveways, trash that she has to pick up daily in her yard, people walking through her garden, etc. Ms. Bennett stated that she has read the zoning ordinance, and she believes that the testing site doesn't comply with the ordinance. Mrs. Bennett is requesting that the COVID testing site be moved back to the senior citizens building at Foster Park, which would allow ample room for parking.

Resident Lisa Washington of 3156 Woodfield Dr., Kokomo, Indiana – Ms. Washington stated that she has been a nurse for over 30 years, and her husband is a local physician who spoke last week at the public conference. Ms. Washington stated that in talking to staff in the health care business, they have not seen anything like this pandemic. Ms. Washington stated that Dr. Washington has had to sign more death certificates for COVID in the last two years than he has his entire career. Ms. Washington stated she is not here to push for masks or not push for masks, but for her family, and scientifically, she agrees with wearing a mask.

Resident Kayla Bennett of 602 E. Jefferson St., Kokomo, Indiana – Mrs. Bennett doesn't agree with the results from COVID testing as it appears a lot of colds, flu, or any type of virus is coming back is resulting in a positive COVID test.

Commissioner President Paul Wyman asked everyone to please address the Commissioners rather than each other.

Resident Paula Davis of 2722 S. 344 E., Kokomo, Indiana – Ms. Davis clarified that Moms for Liberty supports everyone's right to make their own decisions like Mrs. Washington has the right to choose what is best for her children. Ms. Davis stated that Moms for Liberty is not saying that a parent shouldn't be able to choose the right to quarantine, put on a mask, get vaccinated, etc., but Moms for Liberty stands for parent's rights.

Resident Pat Boardman of 2714 Whitehouse Dr., Kokomo, Indiana – Ms. Boardman stated that she is concerned with the children wearing mask all day long and breathing fibers into their lungs. She stated that she has read (from an unnamed source) that the virus is so tiny that the mask can't prevent the virus from entering the mouth. She feels like this is a false sense of security. Ms. Boardman stated that she wants parents to have the right to make their own choice.

Resident David Thomas of 2713 Seabiscuit Lane, Kokomo, Indiana – Mr. Thomas stated that he has a problem with how the County is tracking the results of the PCR test that labels it as COVID; the PCR test are now being recalled by the FDA. Mr. Thomas stated he feels that there is some manipulation going on, and the manipulation going on is in an attempt to "take his freedoms."

Commissioner President Paul Wyman stated that the Commissioners have made no effort or desires to take anybody's freedoms away. There is a pandemic going on that is real. He stated that the reality is that local hospitals are overloaded with sick COVID patients. These are really sick people, and they are dying. The hospitals have dealt with this for over a year and half, and the nursing staff is overwhelmed. Mr. Wyman stated that he felt that for everyday citizens to act like it is no big deal and to say that it is the government just trying to take our freedoms away doesn't make sense – it's really the contrary; the government is trying to protect lives. The Moms for Liberty should understand this the most. Mr. Wyman stated that the truth of that matter is that if the government not done anything to check this virus from the beginning and this pandemic from day one, there would have been pandemonium not only in this community but across this country and the world.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Bray. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dodd, and the motion carried.

HOWARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

PAUL G. WYMAN, PRESIDENT

ROBERT B. BRAY, VICE PRESIDENT

JACK W. DODD, MEMBER

ATTEST:

JESSICA SECREASE, AUDITOR

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